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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses some predictive problems, trends, and dilemmas regarding education for the 21st century, and asks what the future will demand of humankind. Such topics as the information explosion, the increasingly important learning needs in a changing world, and technology versus humanity are examined. Discussion focuses on the implications for ethics, decision making, and responsibility for sports participation in relation to the aforementioned predicted problems and trends. Such topics as the underlying motivational dimensions of sport, play as a need for competence, the importance of self-concept, psychological hedonism, the need for achievement, aggression and violence in sport, and responisibility and sport--focusing on the "larger picture"--are discussed. (JD)

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PROBLEMS, TRENDS, AND DILEMMAS--WHAT THE FUTURE WILL DEMAND AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR ETHICS, DECISION-MAKING, AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR SPORTS PARTICIPATION

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PROBLEMS, TRENDS, AND DILEMMAS —— WHAT THE FUTURE WILL DEMAND AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR ETHICS, DECISION - MAKING, AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR SPORTS PARTICIPATION

INTRODUCTION

Throughtout the world there has been an increased emphasis on the importance of sports both to individuals as well as entire communities.

EDUCATION IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY AND WHAT THE FUTURE WILL DEMAND OF US

Remarkable breakthroughs in science and technology have led to an explosion of knowledge which has contributed to an overflow of information. One scientist reminds us that 2000 new books are published daily; and it is estimated that the total knowledge of mankind now doubles every seven or eight years.

Four "certainties" in our future that have implications for education are: (1) The Information Explosion (2) The Increasing Pace Of Change (3) The Primacy Of Social Problems and (4) Personal Fulfillment Becoming Increasingly Important.

THE INFORMATION EXPLOSION

Knowledge and developments in high technologies such as biotechnology, artificial intelligence, space technologies, etc. have revolutionized learning and the servicing of information. Technical information doubles every ten years. There are over 100,000 technical journals available now, and the number doubles every fifteen years.

THE INCREASING PACE OF CHANGE

Futurists tell us that the speed of communication, transportation, computation, and the amount of power available to us just since 1945 has increased by figures of ten to the seventh, eighth, and ninth power over all the rest of human history. The present is changing and the future will continue to change at even more rapid rates. There are some 90,000 different occupations in our society, and the number keeps increasing. The preparation of youth for a world of such rapid change must be different from that required for a stable, predictable future.

THE PRIMACY OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

We have always lived in a "survival of the fittest" environment. Developments in science in the past one-hundred years, those in industry the past seventy years, and the discovery of atomic power in the last forty-five years, produced an enormous revolution in the fundamental problems faced by mankind. We live in the most interdependent, cooperative society the world has ever known. Few of us could live more than a few hours totally out of touch with other people. The more complex and technological the world becomes, the more each of us is dependent upon thousands of people whom we do not know and have never seen. The primary problems we shall face in the future have to do with learning to live effectively with ourselves and other people.

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PERSONAL FULFILLMENT BECOMING INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT

The personal fulfillment of citizens in an interdependent society is a necessary ingredient for its continuing safety and welfare. As people's basic needs are fulfilled, they are at the same time set free to explore at higher levels. From this it follows that the more a society succeeds in providing human beings with goods and services that fulfill basic needs, the more its citizens will seek the fulfillment of higher needs such as love, esteem, and self-actualization.

LEARNING NEEDS IN A CHANGING WORLD

Some of the learning needs of the "Society of Knowledge" will include the following:

1. A reshaping of learning systems to favor innovation, participation, and anticipation in order to facilitate the tackling of the growing complexity that a society of knowledge entails.
2. National programs for the eradication of illiteracy in the shortest time possible.
3. A greater emphasis on research and development, particularly in areas that have a direct bearing on the understanding of the learning process.
4. A concentration on high technology, especially in the case of less-developed countries who must put aside what has been euphemistically called "appropriate" technology.
5. The development of new criteria and parameters, as well as statistical norms and standards, to monitor achievements in the field of education and learning.
6. The building-up of national, regional, and international information networks on learning.
7. The launching of an international multidisciplinary research project on the learning process, involving industrialized and developing countries alike.
8. A new understanding of the concept of "work", with a more intimate connection between employment, learning, and leisure.
9. A novel approach to equity and social justice that would provide equal learning opportunities within and between countries.

LEARNING IS A PERSONAL, HUMANISTIC, AND AFFECTIVE PROCESS

The future requires responsible citizens skilled in social interaction and capable of effective problem solving on the spot. To live successfully in a world of ever-increasing choices calls for people with clear conceptions of what is good, right, and desirable. People's values determine their choices. An effective school system cannot ignore so vital a factor in the preparation of youth.

Values are personal, private, internal characteristics derived from personal experience, exploration, and discovery. Significant learning is always accompanied by emotion or feeling, and educators who rule this out, simultaneously reduce their effectiveness.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION

Concentration On The Human Condition

To meet our responsibilities in preparing youth for the future, curriculum planning must concentrate far more attention on the human condition than is currently the case.

The Curriculum Must Become Increasingly Personal And Individual

Curriculum For The Future Must Emphasize Social Interaction And Responsibility

The increasingly interrelated society of the future can only operate effectively if citizens can be counted on to pull their own weight and look out for others. Therefore, institutions preparing youth for the future should place great emphasis on responsibility and effective human interrelationships. Responsibility is learned like math or any other subject —— by successful experiences at simple levels, followed by increasingly difficult problems paced to the student's readiness and capacity.

Learning responsibility requires confronting problems, making choices, being involved in decisions, accepting the consequences of one's actions, learning from mistakes —— not with respect to artificial problems, but real ones, relevant to current experience. In a similar manner, effective social interaction requires personal involvement with others. It is learned from personal experience, from opportunites to relate to others in increasingly successful ways. It requires social contact and opportunities to learn social skills. It requires the student to experiment, think about, and explore ideas with others.

Schools As Microcosms

In a world where human problems and responsible interactions are essential, schools must themselves become microcosms of such experience.

We Must Temper The Need For Technology With The Need For A Humanistic Basis For Planning The Future

A society of knowledge is one that manages to overcome the "technological fix" and the supremacy of technocrats, so as to democratize the production and the use of the fruits of science and technology for the betterment of life. The survival of the human race, in a society of knowledge, will depend on its ability to bridge an ever-increasing human gap between knowledge and the manner in which it is used.

The future will demand effective problem solvers and citizens who are willing and able to deal effectively with themselves and each other in the solution of human problems that will be an outgrowth of technological advances. It will require an open-system of thinking, with an emphasis on values, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, and understandings —— the things that make us human. What are the implications for sport relative to ethics, decision-making, and responsibility in view of futuristic trends in education?

THE UNDERLYING MOTIVATIONAL DIMENSIONS OF SPORT

Play As A Need For Competence

White (1959) states that play behavior is motivated by an urge within the child to develop an effective familiarity with his environment. He feels that, through competent interaction with one's physical and social environments, the person receives positive feedback from his actions, and experiences a feeling of self-competence.

The Importance Of Self-Concept

Various identifiable personality traits are related to the athlete's self-concept. Traits such as self-confidence, self-assurance, self-assertiveness, self-esteem, and self-respect reflect the person's self-concept. Johnson and others (1966) identified self-confidence as ranking high in athletes. Schendel(1970) found athletes to possess high senses of personal worth and high self-concepts. The research appears to indicate a positive relationship between the concept a person has of himself and his ability to attain achievements in life, especially academic achievement.

PSYCHOLOGICAL HEDONISM

The significance of psychological hedonism (when people choose those courses of action which are pleasurable to them), is a fundamental principle in participating in physical activity and sport. Generally, individuals will choose those activities that are attractive to them and disregard those activities that are unattractive. In essence, these individuals will achieve some psychological gain which they believe will be the result for them. The choice is a conscious and deliberate attempt to maximize pleasure from sport and to minimize its unattractive aspects. If people would be allowed to proceed in maximizing a particular gain which has specific appeal to them, then they will be fundamentally motivated to continue their participation in that activity. Winning is certainly related to psychological hedonism. Winning is more fun than losing! It becomes an effort to maximize pleasure.

THE NEED FOR ACHIEVEMENT

The motive for achievement in an individual is best considered as a disposition toward competing with standards of excellence where evaluation of success or failure is immediate. A great deal of emphasis in sport is placed upon competing against some standard of excellence, and this is the exact focus of achievement motivation theory. If an athlete can derive some meaning from his sport in an emotional context, his level of motivation for achievement will increase.

AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE IN SPORT

In common usage aggression is used to describe prosocial and antisocial behavior. However, scholars are not in agreement as to its definition. Moyer(1972) limits his definition of aggression to hostility and anger-related behavior. Gaskell and Pearton(1979, p.283) prefer the term "assertiveness" to be used for non-emotional, non-harming, task-oriented behavior; and the term "aggressiveness" to be used for hostile, antisocial, and attacking behavior where harming the object is a primary motivation.

I believe that we would agree that the following are aggressive behaviors, and that some are positive and some are negative:

1. A baseball player strikes out and throws his bat at the pitcher.
2. A wrestling coach slaps his wrestler to get him "ready".
3. A football player scores a touchdown and jumps with jubilation in the end zone.
4. A tennis player breaks his racket after missing a shot.

Generally, society accepts the fact that athletics involves emotionality, frustration, and physical encounter. Gaskell and Pearton(1979, p.276) conclude that:

> "The balance of evidence from theories of aggression is that sports involvement may heighten arousal, produce instances of aggressive behaviors and their reward, and provide a context in which the emulation of such behaviors is condoned".

The cues prevalent in modern sport appear to reinforce aggression and violence which is observed and internalized by younger players and fans. This is clearly reversible by regulations and by diligent enforcement of those regulations.

THE COMPULSION TO WIN

We as Americans have learned from early childhood through adulthood, that competition is in nearly every facet of our lives. We have learned to be competitive, and we have learned that winning is the ultimate goal! Such maxims as "Winners never quit and quitters never win!" are imprinted into our personalities. Yet, we often laud the values of participation above winning. We aspire to inculcate into the minds of youth the immortal words of Grantland Rice: "It's not whether you won or lost, but how you played the game!"

Ideally, we would like participants to play to win while exemplifying good sportsmanship; and if they lose to be gracious. However, in reality (from a practical point of view) it is difficult to cultivate the values of sportsmanship and participation in sport, when the players are constantly bombarded with other cultural cues from their peers, television, the media, etc. that espouse that winning is paramount!

THE DILEMMA OF WINNING AND ETHICS IN SPORT

Who is the Client? Who sets the goals? The discussion here is centered around the two clients —— the coaches and the athletes. Are the goals of the coaches and athletes commensurate? Theoretically, the goals and values of both parties in relation to winning and ethics in sport should be congruent.

A coach's behavior may take on characteristic patterns because of the structural position from which they must perform their jobs. That is to say, a coach's career depends on being able to combine winning with generating support, maximizing control, and exercising expedience in his/her role relationships. The visibility and responsibility of the coach, along with the diversity of his/her role set, creates a situation in which success depends on an ability to manage interpersonal relations as well as an ability to perform tasks directly related to goal attainment.

VICTORY ——— THE ULTIMATE MEASUREMENT IN SPORT

Values in sport are measurable and the ultimate measure is victory! Because of this commonly shared belief in the great value of victory, the "Lombardian Ethic" appears to be firmly planted into the morality of Americans, despite minimal resistance from the populace. "Being first or being number 1 is the by-word!"

RESPONSIBILITY AND SPORT ——— FOCUSING ON THE "LARGER PICTURE"

With The millennium around the corner, sport is expected to grow with an ever-increasing popularity. In viewing sport from the perspective of the individual several questions need to be addressed:

1. Why do individuals involve themselves in sport?
2. What are the sport experiences of individual participants?
3. What is the relationship between individual experiences and the characteristics of the sport activities in which they engage?

The days of bland acceptance of sports are past. Entire programs will have to be subjected to careful scrutiny and critcism. Those who defend the merits of sport and their enormous budgets, will have to justify them as never before, and many hallowed preconceptions will be challenged.

The following criticisms will need to be addressed:

1. Children are being introduced into highly organized sports too young.
2. Adults conducting children's programs place too much emphasis on winning.
3. Institutions of higher learning with successful programs should finance them more realistically.
4. Television threatens to engulf many of the inherent values of sports.
5. In many sports programs there is an undue emphasis on violence.
6. Justifying the excesses of sports as a reflection of the excesses of society.
7. Our present program for sports has evaded its responsibility for improving the health of individuals and of the general society.
8. There has been a lack of programs to encourage young people to continue sports activities in adult life.

We are reminded that if sport in the future is to become something other than a series of events that are passively watched by masses of spectators and played by only a few, there will have to be changes in at least the three following areas:

1. Our definition and understanding of sport as an activity.
2. The manner in which sport activities are structured and managed.
3. Our collective commitment to increasing opportunities for widespread participation.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, ideally sport is the embodiment of a balance between playful expression and competitive challenge.

Sports, as an ideal exercise, should transcend any negativism in our society, and offer a more responsible ideal. I believe that we would aspire to envision sport as a vehicle to enhance the development of character and the incalcation of values leading to the improvement of the quality of one's life, and the betterment of society! For as Paul Hoch(1972) would remind us: "We will have humane, creative sports when we have built a humane and creative society —— and not until then!"

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